UNITED NATIONS

CERD

International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.
GENERAL

CERD/SP/SR.14
25 January 1984

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Ninth Meeting

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 20 January 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. BUFFUM (Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs)

Chairman: Mr. VAN DER STOEL (Netherlands)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

1. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, declared open the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. He welcomed the delegations of those States which had become parties to the Convention since the Eighth Meeting namely, Afghanistan, China, Democratic Kampuchea, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mozambique, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. The number of States parties now stood at 122 or, more than three quarters of the membership of the United Nations, which reflected the growing awareness among the international community of the evil and dangers of racism and racial discrimination. The Convention constituted a solid basis for dealing with such dangers. However, preventive action in the form of educational, cultural and information activities, was also needed to win full acceptance of the principle of equality among men. Seen in that context, the valuable work carried out by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination took on added importance.

2. The Meeting had been convened by the Secretary-General in accordance with article 8 of the Convention to elect nine members of the Committee whose terms of office had expired on 19 January 1984, and to consider a report by the Secretary-General on the Committee's expenses. In addition, in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 37/44 and 38/20, the Meeting had been asked to consider the reporting obligations of States parties under the Convention. Despite the achievements of the past 15 years, there was still a significant number of reports from States parties overdue. Since repeated reminders from the Committee had not had the desired effect, the Committee had decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to that important matter. Some of the factors involved were analysed in the report which the Secretary-General had submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session (A/38/393), which also contained a number of specific suggestions. The General Assembly had then requested the Secretary-General to submit his report, together with an analytical summary of its own consideration of the report to the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention (CERD/SP/20).

3. In spite of that problem, the Committee had accomplished a great deal in the two years since the last Meeting of the States Parties in January 1982. Following the entry into force of article 14 of the Convention on 3 December 1982, which recognized the competence of the Committee to consider communications from individuals or groups of individuals, the Committee had been able to adopt procedures for dealing with such communications, thereby opening a totally new avenue in the field of human rights.

4. Within the context of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the Committee had participated in a number of activities, including the preparations for the Second World Conference held at Geneva from 1 to 12 August 1983. The Committee had contributed two substantial studies to that Conference, one on article 4 of the Convention, which, among other things, required States parties to prohibit racial propaganda and racist groups at the national

(The Temporary Chairman)

level, and a second on article 7, which called for the adoption of effective educational and cultural measures to combat racial discrimination.

5. Such activities had been above and beyond the Committee's regular and recurrent obligations under the Convention. During the period 1982-1983, the Committee had examined a total of 110 reports from 76 different States parties. In the last two years, the Committee had also increased its efforts to bring about the end of apartheid in South Africa and to eliminate racial discrimination in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. Namibia, represented by the United Nations Council for Namibia, had become a State party to the Convention.

6. Lastly, he drew attention to General Assembly resolutions 37/45, 37/46, 38/18 and 38/21, commending the Committee's activities. Resolutions 37/45 and 38/21 also appealed to States parties to consider the possibility of making the declaration envisaged in article 14 of the Convention, which had so far been made by only 10 of the 122 States Parties.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

7. Mr. THORSTEINSSON (Iceland) nominated Mr. Van Der Stoel (Netherlands) for the office of Chairman of the Meeting.

8. Mr. KARRAN (Guyana) seconded the nomination.

9. Mr. Van Der Stoel (Netherlands) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

10. Mr. Van Der Stoel (Netherlands) took the Chair.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (CERD/SP/17)

11. Mr. FURSLAND (United Kingdom) said that he was confused by the circulation of two provisional agendas. The first (CERD/SP/17) contained nine items, while the second (CERD/SP/17*/) contained only eight, item 9, entitled "Other matters", having been deleted. It was his understanding that the agenda of recent meetings had included such an item. He asked the Secretary to confirm whether his understanding was correct and to explain why the item had been deleted.

12. Mr. PERUGINI (Italy) endorsed the comments made by the representative of the United Kingdom. It was indicated in the provisional agenda contained in document CERD/SP/17*/ that it had been reissued for technical reasons. That was not, strictly speaking, correct. Either item 9 had been inadvertently omitted or the provisional agenda had been reissued for substantive reasons.

13. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) said that her delegation supported the inclusion in the provisional agenda of an item on other matters.

14. Miss REANDA (Secretary of the Meeting) said that the agendas for the first five meetings of the States parties had not included an open-ended item on other matters. Such an item had, however, been included in the agenda of the Sixth Meeting in 1978, following the decision taken by the Committee on the Elimination

(Miss Reanda)

of Racial Discrimination to derestrict its documents. That decision had been brought to the attention of the States parties, which had then decided to declassify their own documentation. An item on other matters had also been included for the convenience of delegations in the provisional agendas of the Seventh and Eighth Meetings, held in 1980 and 1982, respectively. Statements under the item had been made only at the Eighth Meeting. Objections to the inclusion of the item had been raised by a number of delegations at meetings of the States parties and that had led the Secretariat to re-examine the legal basis for including such an item in the provisional agenda. The Secretariat had concluded that since the item had been challenged by a number of delegations and was not mandated by the rules of procedure or by the Convention, there was no justification for retaining it in the provisional agenda. However, the Secretariat could include such an item if it was specifically instructed to do so. It was regrettable that owing to a technical error a provisional agenda which included the item had been circulated. She emphasized, however, that the provisional agenda which had been annexed to the note verbale sent by the Secretary-General in December 1983, to notify States parties of the convening of the Ninth Meeting was the same as the provisional agenda which had been reissued for technical reasons.

15. Mr. FURSLAND (United Kingdom) said that the Secretariat seemed to have taken a strange approach to the matter. An item entitled "Other matters" had been included in the agenda for at least the preceding three meetings of the States parties even though there had been no specific legislative authority for it. Although it was sometimes useful to break a precedent, it was for the States parties themselves to decide whether they wished to do so. It was a cause of concern to his delegation that the Secretariat had decided to change a precedent without consulting the States parties. The Secretary of the Meeting had said that there was no specific authority in the rules of procedure for including such an item in the agenda. However, the rules of procedure did not even mention an agenda at all. Thus the point raised by the Secretary was no reason for excluding one particular item which had traditionally been included in the agenda. Opinions might differ as to whether such an item should be included, but that was a substantive, not a technical, question.

16. It was very useful to include an item on other matters in the agenda since it afforded States parties an opportunity to raise important issues relating to the Convention. At the last Meeting of the States Parties, delegations from several regions had spoken under the item. His delegation therefore favoured the inclusion of such an item in the agenda of the current and all future meetings of the States parties.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that the inclusion of an item entitled "Other matters" in the agenda would seem to be a routine matter. On the other hand, some delegations might have difficulties if under that item matters requiring an immediate decision were raised. Accordingly, he suggested that the item should be included in the provisional agenda on the clear understanding that no such matter would be raised.

18. It was so decided.

19. The provisional agenda, as amended, was adopted.

ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE (CERD/SP/2)

20. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the rules of procedure adopted at previous meetings of the States parties (CERD/SP/2) and suggested that the Meeting should also adopt the same rules of procedure on the understanding that, in accordance with rule 20, any procedural matter not covered by them would be dealt with by the Chairman in the light of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly which might be applicable to the matter at issue. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Meeting agreed to his suggestion.

21. It was so decided.

22. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to rules 2 and 3 of the rules of procedure concerning the credentials of representatives. He had been informed by the Secretary-General that credentials had not yet been received from a number of States parties represented at the Meeting and urged them to ensure that their credentials were submitted to the Secretary-General as soon as possible. He suggested that, in accordance with rule 3, the representatives of those States parties should nevertheless be authorized provisionally to participate in the Meeting.

23. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF OTHER OFFICERS OF THE MEETING

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, under rule 4 of the rules of procedure, the Meeting should elect one to four Vice-Chairmen from among the representatives of the States parties. He had been informed that Mr. Boris Tsvetkov (Bulgaria), Mr. Mohammed Saeed S. Al-Mosfir (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Atsu-Koffi Amega (Togo) had been nominated for the posts of Vice-Chairmen by their respective regional groups.

25. Mr. Tsvetkov (Bulgaria), Mr. Al-Mosfir (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Amega (Togo) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

ELECTION OF THE NINE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION TO REPLACE THOSE WHOSE TERM OF OFFICE EXPIRED ON 19 JANUARY 1984, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 8, PARAGRAPHS 1 TO 5, OF THE CONVENTION (CERD/SP/18 and Add. 1-4)

26. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the list of candidates nominated by States parties and their biographical data contained in document CERD/SP/18 and Add.1-4. The names of the nine members whose terms had expired on 19 January 1984 and the names of the other nine members who would continue to serve until 19 January 1986 were given in annexes I and II to that document. Of the nine members of the Committee whose terms had expired, two were from Asian countries, three from Eastern European countries, two from Latin American countries and two from Western European and other countries. The candidature of Mr. Girma Amare (Ethiopia) had

(The Chairman)

been withdrawn. He reminded the Meeting of the terms of article 8 of the Convention relating to the election of members of the Committee, in particular, paragraphs 1, 2, 4 and 5 (a).

27. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Perugini (Italy) and Mr. Odoch-Jato (Uganda) acted as tellers.

28. A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	118
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	118
Abstentions:	4
Number of members voting:	118
Required majority:	60
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. Starushenko	90
Mr. Čičanović	89
Mr. Song	86
Mr. Öberg	79
Mr. Cremona	74
Mr. De Pierola Y Balta	74
Mr. Karasimeonov	74
Mrs. Sadiq Ali	73
Mr. Yutzis	72
Mr. Brin Martinez	71
Mr. Gaillac	68
Mr. Daoudy	61
Mr. Manalo	41

29. Having obtained the required majority and the largest number of votes, Mr. Starushenko (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. Čičanović (Yugoslavia), Mr. Song (China), Mr. Öberg (Sweden), Mr. Cremona (Malta), Mr. De Pierola Y Balta (Peru), Mr. Karasimeonov (Bulgaria), Mrs. Sadiq Ali (India), and Mr. Yutzis (Argentina) were elected members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination for a four-year term beginning on 20 January 1984.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATES PARTIES FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION UNDER ARTICLE 8, PARAGRAPH 6, OF THE CONVENTION: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (CERD/SP/19)

30. The CHAIRMAN reminded delegations that under article 8, paragraph 6, of the Convention, States parties were responsbile for the expenses of the members of the Committee while they were in performance of Committee duties. It should be noted that the Secretary-General's report referred to a number of difficulties which had been encountered in that connection.

31. Miss REANDA (Secretary of the Meeting) said that since the compilation of the list of States whose assessments were outstanding, Bulgaria, Fiji, Finland, Lebanon, Norway and Tonga had paid their assessments in full, while Brazil, the Central African Republic and Poland had paid part of the amounts due. Following those payments, the total amount outstanding as at 20 January 1984 was $146,718.74.

32. Mrs. OSODE (United Nations Council for Namibia) said that the General Assembly had requested specialized agencies and other United Nations organs to waive any assessments relating to Namibia's participation while it was represented by the Council. Accordingly, the Council requested the States parties to waive the assessment on the Territory for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

33. Mr. UY (Budget Division) said that it was encouraging that a number of States had paid their outstanding assessments, but the fact that some $147,000 - representing over 60 per cent of the total assessed for 1983 - remained outstanding was extremely perturbing. Serious financial problems had arisen owing to the shortfall. It was to be hoped that States parties would take action to resolve the matter.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the States parties wished to waive the assessment on Namibia.

35. It was so decided.

36. Mr. LEE (Canada) said that his delegation was not pleased that the general funds of the United Nations were being used to meet the obligations of States parties under the Convention. Those countries which were in arrears should be urged to meet their obligations so that the important work being performed under the Convention could continue.

37. Mr. SALAND (Sweden) said that the substantial amount of assessments still outstanding gave cause for concern. Some of the contributions had been overdue for more than five years. In fact almost half of the States parties were in arrears. The obligations of States parties under the Convention was quite clear. It was equally clear that the United Nations had no funds available to finance activities under the Convention. The situation had to be resolved. His delegation formally proposed that an urgent appeal should be addressed to States parties whose contributions were outstanding.

38. Mr. KESSELY (Chad) said that in acceding to the Convention, his country had been motivated by its concern for human rights and its desire to join with other countries in support of such rights. Despite civil war in his country, his Government had never neglected human rights and had always condemned racial discrimination, particularly in South Africa. His country was in arrears with its contributions, not through deliberate neglect, but because of its unfortunate domestic situation. As matters improved, the Government would make every effort to meet its obligations.

39. Mr. MAKEKA (Lesotho) said that the financial years of a number of countries said to be in arrears did not correspond to the calendar year, with the result that the financial year 1983/84 had not yet ended in those countries. They were thus not, in fact, in arrears.

40. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, further to the proposals made by the representatives of Canada and Sweden, the Meeting should adopt the following decision:

> "The Ninth Meeting of the States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,
>
> "Decides to request its Chairman to address an urgent appeal to those States parties whose assessments are outstanding to take measures to satisfy their responsibilities for the expenses of the members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination under article 8 (6) of the Convention."
>
> The Chairman's proposal was adopted.

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF STATES PARTIES UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND OTHER RELEVANT HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS - GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 37/44: NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (CERD/SP/20)

41. The CHAIRMAN said that the item had been referred to the Meeting in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 37/44 and 38/20. In accordance with the latter resolution, any suggestions which States parties might wish to make at the Meeting would be communicated to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which would take account of them in making its recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session.

42. Mr. ROWE (Australia) said that one of the most important innovations in the efforts of the United Nations to promote human rights had been the establishment of machinery by which States parties' performance of their obligations could be monitored by an expert and impartial body. The reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination showed the extent to which a stimulating and constructive dialogue could develop between States parties and the Committee. Australia valued the Committee's work in monitoring periodic reports, and had therefore become increasingly concerned over the non-submission or late submission of such reports. It was clear that some States had made inadequate efforts to

(Mr. Rowe, Australia)

comply with their treaty obligations, and that others might require appropriate assistance in their efforts to do so.

43. The Committee was obliged under existing arrangements to consider more than 60 periodic reports each year, which substantially exceeded the number of reports which it had in practice been able to consider annually. Further, were all the overdue reports to be submitted, the Committee would be faced with a monumental task. In addition, with the entry into force of the procedures relating to the consideration of complaints from individuals, the Committee would be responsible for an important new task, which was likely to absorb considerable time and attention, particularly in the early stages.

44. Australia's experience suggested that, after the submission of an initial comprehensive report, and allowing perhaps for one reasonably prompt opportunity for the Committee to follow up on its comments and to review the responsiveness of a State to its comments, it might become repetitious for the Committee to enter into a dialogue every two years. Moreover, requiring States to report too frequently would lead to a devaluation and ritualization of the reporting process.

45. A solution might lie in extending the interval between reports. The Committee could adopt guidelines which provided that, once a satisfactory initial report had been received from a State party, future comprehensive reports could be submitted on every second occasion, i.e. every four years instead of every two. The requirements of the Convention would be met if, in the intervening period, States submitted a brief formal report indicating that they would provide no further information at that stage but would submit a comprehensive report on the next occasion. The submission of reports at four-year intervals would enhance their significance and would be consistent with existing practice under other international human rights instruments. Such a procedure would provide an opportunity to assess the extent to which extending the reporting period would benefit the Committee's work, and allow the Committee and States parties to judge the usefulness or necessity of formalizing a longer reporting period. His delegation's proposal could be fruitfully considered by the Committee at its subsequent session or sessions. His delegation would welcome the views of other States parties on such an approach.

46. Mr. PERUGINI (Italy) said that all States parties appeared to agree that the problem of reporting obligations would take on enormous proportions before long unless appropriate measures were taken. The best solution would most probably be to extend the interval between reports. The three most important reasons for doing so were: first, the number of overdue reports clearly demonstrated that a large number of States had difficulty in complying with their obligation to submit reports every two years; second, if all reports were presented on time, the Committee would not have time to examine them thoroughly; and third, most of the States parties to the Convention had similar reporting obligations under other human rights instruments. General Assembly resolution 38/20 pointed the way towards a solution to the problem. He hoped that the recommendations which the Committee would make in the light of the Secretary-General's report and the comments made in the General Assembly and at the current Meeting would lead to a solution of the problem at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

47. Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas) welcomed the Secretary-General's suggestion that reports should be submitted at four-year intervals and that technical assistance should be provided in preparing them. It was very important that the issue of reporting on all the human rights instruments should be considered as a whole in order to minimize problems and to ensure that the reporting obligations did not discourage ratifications of and accessions to those instruments.

48. Miss BANKS (New Zealand) observed that a growing number of States parties were having difficulty in meeting their reporting obligations under the Convention. The fact that the total number of overdue reports had increased by 120 per cent in the period 1977-1982 suggested that the current reporting procedure needed to be reconsidered. Those States parties that had not already done so should express their views on how best to resolve the problem. Her delegation agreed that the reporting period should be extended, which would enable States, especially those with limited resources, to give adequate attention to their reporting obligations under other human rights instruments as well as under the Convention. It supported the Secretary-General's recommendation on the understanding that reports would then be of a substantive nature. Her delegation's aim was to safeguard the original principles of the Convention, as well as the capacity of the Committee to carry out its mandate.

49. She hoped that the Committee would make its views known on the suggested extension. The question of how such a change might best be implemented could be taken up again at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly in the light of the views expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

50. Mr. HAMER (Netherlands) said that his delegation had stressed the need to find a solution to the backlog of reports ever since the situation had been drawn to the attention of the General Assembly. As a country which had difficulty in compiling reports every two years, the Netherlands supported the idea of providing technical assistance to developing countries to facilitate compliance with their obligations. There appeared to be a broad consensus that the best way of proceeding was to extend the interval between substantive reports. The backlog could undermine the effectiveness of the Convention and the institution of State reporting. In addition, the difficulties involved might discourage new accessions to human rights instruments. If the Committee considered that an amendment of article 9 of the Convention was the only option, his delegation would support it, although it felt in general that amendments to international instruments should be made only as a last resort.

51. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's suggestion on convening a meeting of the chairmen of the various bodies entrusted with monitoring the implementation of human rights instruments. However, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was facing the greatest difficulties and it should be given priority. Indeed, increasing the interval between reports to the Committee would ease the difficulties faced by States in meeting their reporting obligations under other instruments.

52. Mr. BORCHARD (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation's views on the subject were reflected in document A/38/393. He sympathized with the Secretary-General's approach in that document and his suggestions to improve the

(Mr. Borchard, Federal Republic of Germany)

situation. The normal reporting period should be extended to five years, and the Committee should be able to call for an interim report if it deemed one desirable. The States parties should adopt a protocol amending article 9 of the Convention.

53. In 1984, 72 States parties were due to submit periodic reports to the Committee, while only 12 would do so under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Such a large number of reports did not make for an extensive dialogue between the Committee and States parties. In considering the possibility of extending the reporting period account should be taken of the reporting system under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Indeed, the reporting obligations assumed under the various human rights instruments represented a burden for many countries, especially developing countries. He therefore hoped that the General Assembly would, at its thirty-ninth session, act promptly on the recommendations to be submitted by the Committee and the States parties to the Covenant.

54. Mr. LEE (Canada) said that his delegation supported the suggestions made by the Secretary-General. The process of compiling reports made States take stock of the situation in their own countries and review their policies on racial discrimination. Therefore, a carefully prepared report could be of even greater value to the country concerned than it was to the Committee. Such a process was, however, time-consuming. Furthermore, the Committee was being presented with so many reports that it was unable to consider them in sufficient depth. Therefore, his delegation fully supported an extension of the interval between the submission of reports. A four-year reporting period would be more in line with obligations under other human rights instruments and would be sufficient to reflect changes in people's attitudes. However, any extension should not affect the Committee's right to ask for a report if it considered it necessary.

55. The reporting period could be altered only by a formal amendment to the Convention. His delegation would propose the preparation of a protocol in the General Assembly. It did, however, take note with interest of the suggestions made by the representative of Australia.

56. Mr. YAKOVLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his Government supported article 9 of the Convention and had stricly observed its provisions. If there were problems with the reporting system under the Convention, his delegation would not oppose the consideration of extending the interval between reports with a view to reaching a consensus, which at present did not exist. It was, however, important to have a short statement of guiding principles to help the search for consensus. The two-year reporting period was a legal rather than a technical matter. A change would require an amendment to the Convention. If a protocol was prepared or amendments made to the Convention, it would be necessary first to consider how such instruments would enter into force, since they would have to be ratified by States. His delegation was also prepared to consider the proposal made by the representative of Australia but stressed the need to hold further consultations on the whole subject of reporting obligations and to preserve the legal basis of the Convention.

57. Mrs. BELLORINI PARRALES (Nicaragua) said that, since universal acceptance of the Convention was of the utmost importance for the achievement of its goals, her delegation was encouraged by the growing number of States which had ratified or acceded to it. The work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination contributed to the attainment of the goals of the Convention and, therefore, States parties should support that work and strive to submit their reports on time. Since co-ordination among other relevant human rights bodies was also important, her delegation supported the convening of meetings of the chairmen of such bodies. Her delegation also agreed that technical assistance should be provided to developing countries to help them prepare their reports.

58. Mr. ALLEYNE (Trinidad and Tobago) said that it was important for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to be in a position to consider reports when they were submitted. If reports were to be submitted every four years, the States parties to the Convention could be divided into four groups according to alphabetical order, with the reports of each group falling due in a specific year of the four-year period. If reports were to continue to be required at two-year intervals, the States parties could be divided into two groups according to alphabetical order.

59. Mr. YOUGH (Nigeria) said that his delegation would prefer to maintain the status quo. He recognized that problems did exist, since some countries required technical assistance in preparing reports, while others were unwilling to submit their reports at the specified time. A date should be set for the submission of reports and, therefore, the suggestion made by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago was attractive. However, the grouping of States according to alphabetical order might also present difficulties, since a particular group might include a number of countries that had problems with the submission of reports. He felt that no formal decision should be taken at the current meeting, so that States would have ample opportunity to exchange views on the subject.

60. The CHAIRMAN said that the suggestions made in the discussion would be referred to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

OTHER MATTERS

61. Mr. FURSLAND (United Kingdom) said that his delegation welcomed the inclusion in the agenda of the item entitled "Other matters" and hoped that a similar item would be included in the agenda of subsequent meetings.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

62. The CHAIRMAN declared the meeting closed.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.